

local needs and should advocate an equitable distribution of public resources and complementary private activities commensurate with community needs.

**Assurance:** Assurance means that high quality services, including personal health services, which are needed for the protection of the community are available and accessible to all persons. Each community should receive proper consideration in the allocation of federal, state, and local funds for health. Each community should be informed about how to obtain public health services and/or comply with health requirements.

In summary, community -based health planning is a process, which assists local citizens in their respective communities to do the following:

- **Identifying the community's health care needs.**
- **Examine the social, economic, and political realities affecting the local delivery of health care.**
- **Determine what the community can realistically achieve in a health care system to meet their needs.**
- **Develop and mobilize an action plan based on analysis for the community.**

The end result of the process should answer three questions for the community:

Where is the community now?

Where does the community want to be?

How will it get there?

The Tennessee Department of Health is committed to assisting communities throughout our state in finding the answers to these questions via the Community Diagnosis process. The following is the Smith County Community Diagnosis Document, which details the process the Smith County community utilized to assess its strength, weaknesses, and gaps in resources. A very thorough analysis of health statistical data, community surveys, resources, and key leaders perceptions of Smith County's health care status facing the community is presented in document form to be utilized as a baseline document for public relations, grant applications, and as a foundation of the work plan for the future.

## **Summary**

The Smith County Health Council was established in January 1998 by the Tennessee Department of Health Community Development Staff with an initial group of thirteen community representatives. The Smith County Health Council has now developed into a council of thirty-nine members. This council consists of various community leaders such as the mayor, county executive, school superintendent, industry representation, health care providers, local law enforcement, various community agencies, and other concerned community leaders as determined appropriate by the council members.(appendix 1) The Department of Health Community Development Staff facilitates the Community